

Remarks

In paragraphs 1-7 of the Office Action mailed July 27, 2005, reference is made to the Restriction to the invention of Group I including claims 1-19, and invention of Group II including claims 20-28, and the provisional election with traverse by the attorney for the applicants to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-19. The Attorney for the Applicants affirms the election of the invention of Group I including claims 1-19 and does so without traverse. In addition, the Attorney is canceling claims 20-28 of Group II under the proviso that these claims can be prosecuted in a related patent application.

The Office Action rejects Claims 1 and 4-9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,514,615 to Sun et al. Sun does not teach or suggest coating a superabsorbent polymer (SAP) with monovalent salts, divalent salts, trivalent salts and higher salts, as taught in the present application. In fact, Sun makes no reference to any such salts. Independent Claim 1 is amended herein to recite this aspect of the present invention. Accordingly, Claim 1 is patentable over Sun. Claim 2 has been cancelled. Dependent Claims 3-9 are patentable over Sun at least for the reasons regarding the independent Claim.

The Office Action also rejects Claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,562,743 to Cook et al. Cook et al. is directed towards an absorbent core made from: (a) *fibers* that have been treated with a polyvalent ion-containing compound; and (b) SAP particles. See Col. 3, lines 54-57; and Col. 4, lines 8-11. Cook et al. does not teach or suggest that the *SAP particles* are treated with the polyvalent ion-containing compound. Rather, only the *fibers* of Cook et al. are treated. The present application, on the other hand, teaches that the SAP particulate is coated. Independent Claim 1 clearly recites this aspect of the present invention. Therefore, Claim 1 is patentable over Cook et al., and dependent Claims 3-9 are patentable over Cook et al. at least for the reasons regarding the independent Claim.

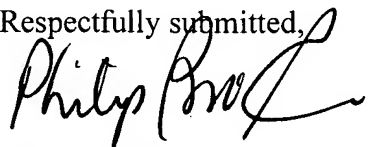
The Office Action further rejects Claims 10-19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(1) as being unpatentable over Cook et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,338,766 to Phan et al. As discussed above, Cook et al. does not teach or suggest that the SAP is treated with the polyvalent ion-containing compound. Phan et al. also does not teach or suggest coating a SAP with a salt, as recited in independent Claim 10. Thus, Phan et al. does not make up for

the deficiencies in Cook et al. and independent Claim 10 is patentable over Cook et al. in view of Phan et al. Dependent Claims 11-19 are patentable at least for the reasons regarding independent Claim 10.

In view of the forgoing, allowance of Claims 1 and 3-19 is hereby requested.

If the Examiner has any further questions, Applicants' Attorney would welcome a telephone call to resolve these questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Philip P. McCann

Reg. No. 30,919

Smith Moore LLP

P.O. Box 21927

Greensboro, NC 27420

(336) 378-5302

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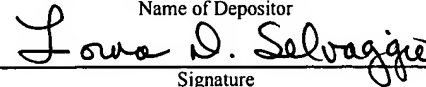
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